

# **School Evaluation Report**

**Glenwood Leadership Academy**

**901 Sweetser Avenue  
Evansville  
Indiana  
47713**

**Principal: Tammy Dexter  
Dates of evaluation: May 9 – 11 2011  
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## Part 1: The School Context

### Information about the school:

Glenwood Leadership Academy has an enrolment of 357 students from grades K through 12. The school population comprises 56 African American, 27 percent White, 14 percent of students from two or more races and 3 percent Hispanic or Latino. Less than one percent of students are designated as English language learners. The percentage of students that are Title 1 eligible is 97 percent. The attendance rate has increased from the previous year and is currently 98.7 percent.

The school has been created by combining the Glenwood Middle School, which had previously been based in the current building with the John M Culver Elementary School which has been moved from its previous location just over a mile away. The old middle school building was remodelled and refitted during the summer recess and additional accommodation including a new office, media center, nurse's office, clinic space and gymnasium were added. Although not completely finished, the school opened its doors for students in August 2010. The combining of these two school into one coherent and coordinated entity has not been an easy process and some resentment remains with staff, students and parents, many of which hanker after "the good old days". In reality the "old days" had been far from "good" for the students in either of these schools as both had been failing to meet their needs to a very serious degree, and there had been significant gaps in achievement for particular minority groups.

The John M Culver Elementary School had been performing at an extremely low level for a number of years and was showing little or no sign of recovery. There were also significant achievement gaps with special education students doing particularly poorly at all grade levels and girls doing very badly at science and, to a lesser extent social studies and math. Boys were doing particularly badly in all grade levels at English Language Arts (ELA). Scores in ELA at Grade 3 had flat-lined with only 42 percent of students achieving either a proficient level, or better. The state average being 79 percent. There was a similar, if slightly worse situation in math with only 27 percent of students reaching the required standard in 2010. The state average being 76 percent proficient or better. At Grade 4, scores in 2010 showed that only 39 percent of students reached proficiency in ELA, while only 30 percent reached the required standard in math. State averages being 77 percent for both subject areas. In science only 22 percent of the students achieved proficiency, with girls doing significantly worse than the boys. The state average is for 75 percent of students to reach proficiency. The situation in Grade 5 was probably even more discouraging since scores were continuing to decline in both subjects. In ELA the percentage of students reaching proficiency had gone from 42 percent in 2008 to 38 percent in 2009. By 2010 this had plummeted to the point where only 16 percent of students were reaching the required standard. Math scores declined from 44 percent to 36 percent over the same period. The state averages in 2010 were 71 percent for ELA and 81 percent for math. Only 19 percent of students reached proficiency in social studies when they were tested in 2010. The state average was for 64 percent proficiency on this test.

The performance of Glenwood Middle School had been similarly poor for a number of years with already very low scores continuing to decline in Grades 6 and Grade 7 scores flat-lining at a very low level. Significant gaps in achievement were identified in several sub-groups, notably the low performance of male students in ELA, girl students in science and special education students across all subject areas.

In Grade 6 the percentage of students at Glenwood Middle reaching proficiency in ELA fell from 40 percent in 2008 to 36 percent in 2009. By 2010 the percentage was down to a new low point of 31 percent. The state average in 2010 was 72 percent. In math 54 percent of students reached proficiency in 2008. This had dropped to 45 percent in 2009 and to only 33 percent by 2010, when the state average was 76 percent. Only 22 percent of grade 6 students reached proficiency in science in 2010 when the average level of proficiency across the state was 58 percent. In Grade 7 ELA scores have declined from 42 percent in 2009 to only 30 percent in 2010, while in math, scores are steady at a consistently low level of 28 percent. State averages in 2010 were 72 percent for both of these subject areas. Only 23 percent of Grade 7 students reached proficiency in social studies in 2010. The average performance across the state showed 64 percent of students reaching a proficient level or better. In Grade 8, ELA and math scores have declined steadily for the last two years from existing very low levels in 2008. ELA scores have gone down 11 percentage points while math scores have gone down by 7 percentage points.

The current principal took up her post in the summer of 2010. The intervention model that was selected for the school was the 'Transformation' model. The principal had no involvement in writing the current School Improvement Grant (SIG) and had no control over the selection of the partners that are supporting the turnaround efforts at the school. These include the following: **The Cicero Group**, who are charged by the School Corporation with establishing the DataWise process throughout the building, coaching instructional coaches, leading the development of teaching and learning protocols and providing the structure for team meetings; **Brown University**, who are charged by the School Corporation with developing a student engagement survey as well as providing a week long leadership development experience for the transformation team; **Kristie Sweeney**, who has been engaged to mentor the principal and assist her with professional development, scheduling, conducting walk-throughs and assistance with early literacy and **New View**, who have been engaged to train all staff in Applied Control Theory (ACT) during the summer of 2011. This is designed to positively impact student behaviors and relationships within the school. The principal was trained in this process in January.

## Part 2: Overview

### The areas of the school that have been improved:

- The leadership has a realistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the school and is well aware how much there still remains to be done from the original Year 1 agenda;
- There has been some improvement in academic scores in grades 3 through 5 in ELA and math;
- The behavior of the students has improved, but more work will be required to establish PBIS and ACT next year;
- The school has worked hard, with some success, to develop community outreach and to develop the building as a center of the local community;
- Teachers and students now have much better access to a range of high quality technology resources;
- Teachers have had excellent access to a wide range of professional development;
- Attendance has increased impressively and is now well above district and state averages;
- Improvements have been made in the analysis of performance data and a start has been made in developing formative assessments;
- Some of the additional staff, paid for with the SIG funding, are making a positive impact on the work of the school;
- There are now some small pockets of satisfactory to good practice in learning and instruction;
- The school is being well supported by IDOE and has received some useful support from some of its partners;
- The new principal is energetic, highly visible and is learning quickly. She is very reflective and has proved adept at changing things round that have not worked;
- The school provides spacious and well equipped accommodation;
- The principal has greatly appreciated the coaching and support she has received from her mentor.

## The areas of the school that remain to be improved:

- Standards still need to be raised in all content areas in all grade levels throughout the school;
- The work required to establish a culture of continuous rigorous improvement in the school has not yet been done to sufficiently improve the quality of school climate and discipline and to improve the quality of education provided by the school;
- There is still no system to develop a rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation system for teachers and principals, and as a result the required “revolutionary changes” in learning and teaching have not yet taken place;
- The school has not been able to deliver a rewards structure for school leaders, teachers and other staff who, in implementing the agreed model of teaching and learning have increased student achievement. It does not have an agreed procedure for the removal of staff members that do not achieve this standard;
- While staff have accessed professional development it has not always been of high enough quality and has not been sufficiently aligned with the instructional program or the needs of the school;
- There are not yet sufficiently robust incentives and strategies in place to ensure that the school can recruit and retain high quality staff;
- Although learning time has been increased by 30 minutes for students in grades k – 5 this is not a sufficient increase of time for all students;
- Insufficient progress has been made to promote the continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction since the PLC’s have folded;
- The school has not been given sufficient operational flexibility by the school corporation;
- The school has not always received sufficient, on-going, intensive, technical support and assistance from the school corporation;
- The school has not received sufficient, on-going, intensive, technical assistance and support from several of the educational partners selected by the school corporation, and should consider, substituting new, more practical, cost efficient partners;
- Not enough work has yet been done to ensure, through monitoring lesson planning and the way in which lessons are taught, that the agreed curriculum is delivered with consistency, fidelity and sufficient skill.

## Part 3: Main Findings

**Overall Evaluation:** The school's overall performance and the extent to which the SIG funding has resulted in significant improvement:

**This school has made unsatisfactory progress overall in most areas and as a result learning, teaching and the achievement of students remain at an unacceptably low level. The additional funding allocated through the School Improvement Grant (SIG) has not made sufficient impact on the quality and standards that exist in the school.**

The year has been an extremely difficult one for all concerned and it is clear that a number of key aspects will need to be resolved before the work on the areas that require progress can either be started or completed. The culture that exists in the school is not sufficiently positive to meet the needs of many staff and students and although things are a lot better there are still significant rifts between the different sectors of the school. Some staff members are still taking advantage of the inconsistencies of policy and approach that exist between the different senior leaders and freely admit that they can get a better deal if they ask particular members of the team. It is now essential that the senior leadership consolidate around a clear and transparent vision for the future and define exactly what the official school position is on all pertinent matters. Once the senior team have reached full agreement on all of these key aspects then time must be taken to share these enhanced expectations with staff, students, parents and the community. The key to the success of this process will be the diligence with which senior staff then monitors the implementation of these agreed policies, and how they manage non-compliance.

The quality of learning and teaching, and the use of assessment data is very variable, and spans the range from good to very poor. Generally speaking learning is barely satisfactory since levels of engagement are poor and motivation is weak. This is mainly because the teaching is generally poorly planned, lessons are very teacher dominated and work is not well enough matched to the individual needs of the students because it is not well enough informed by data. A significant proportion of staff members do not relate well enough to the students and do not set high enough expectations. Too many students are ejected from classes on an almost daily basis for perceived behaviour infractions and a number of teachers make disproportionately high numbers of special education referrals in the expectation that particular students will be removed from their classes. Progress in classes is generally not as good as it should be and the majority of students do not make a year of progress per year as they move through the school. As a result standards of achievement remain below district and state averages. There has been some improvement in the achievement of students in grades 3 through 5 in both reading and math. The curriculum is not generally well enough aligned with either the common core standards or the state standards and as a result students are often not well enough prepared for the summative assessments. The school has begun work on some formative assessments, notably in math in the older grades, but this work now needs to be spread throughout other grades and subject areas. Staff members now have good access to a wide range of new, good quality IT equipment, which is put to good use in the majority of classes.

After a very slow start in a building that was not completely ready to accept either staff or students, the school has set about dealing with the things that needed to be done, as well as beginning to drive the SIG agenda of mandated actions. The progress against the elements required by the grant has been very slow, with some items just getting started, some partially completed and others being put off until the environment for change becomes more supportive. The principal has worked very hard to make

things work and is a very quick learner, but given her lack of experienced leadership, she has made one or two decisions that she would not make again. She has worked very hard in these cases to regroup and has managed to maintain momentum well, despite setbacks. Staff members have been given access to a lot of professional development opportunities, but since much of it is not directly related to the needs of the students it does not always make sufficient impact on either the quality of education or the standards achieved by the students. Links with parents are generally weak although a reasonable degree of progress has been made in developing closer links with the local community.

The schools lead turnaround partners were selected for them by the district. Understandably they tended to select vendors that already had district contracts or were working in other schools. Although this gave some continuity for the district it meant that the services provided by the partners were not always a good match with the needs of the school.

### **Areas of specific importance specifically referred to in the SIG application:**

#### ***Replace the principal who led the school prior to the implementation of the turnaround model***

There has been satisfactory progress with this aspect of the work of the school. Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC) selected Mrs Tammy Dexter as the new principal for Glenwood Leadership Academy after considering a field of candidates drawn only from within the school corporation. Mrs Dexter had previously been an Assistant Principal at Evansville's Harrison High School where she served in that position for two years. Mrs Dexter had been part of the Learning Leadership Cadre, a group of aspiring leaders developed by the school corporation as part of its partnership with Brown University. Although Mrs Dexter was an existing administrator with a good track record and considerable theoretical experience, she had never led a school, particularly one consisting of two communities placed together in an arranged marriage.

Mrs Dexter had an extremely difficult task on her hands for a number of reasons and has worked extremely hard to overcome a number of challenges that would have been exceedingly daunting even for an experienced principal with turnaround experience and expertise. School started in the fall of 2010 in a building that was still not finished and which had much of its furniture and resources piled in the gymnasium, as a result she had almost no opportunity to develop the staff, drawn from two different schools, into one cohesive team and as a result the year has been marred by misunderstandings and misinterpretations between staff which have been very time consuming and, at times quite draining. Another consequence of the lack of any real opportunity for meaningful team building is that Mrs Dexter could never share her vision and outline how this was going to be achieved to the whole school.

The SIG funding has been used, in part, to provide Mrs Dexter with a coach, Kristie Sweeney, to provide mentoring support and assist her with providing professional development to the staff, scheduling the work of the school, conducting walk-throughs and assisting her with the development of early literacy strategies. Unfortunately this support did not begin until the start of December and Mrs Dexter was obliged to make several key decisions without the benefit of prior experience or trusted support with sufficient expertise. Kristie Sweeney has continued to provide Mrs Dexter with professional support and guidance that she requires, but due to the distances she has to travel to get to the school, her visits have not been of sufficient length and frequency to meet all of her needs.

The School Corporation has provided leadership and management support to the principal, and these staff were instrumental in Mrs Dexter being able to complete the required teacher evaluations on schedule. The inclusion of the previous principal of Glenwood Middle School as part of the district support team for the school has caused some difficulties and the rationale for this decision is difficult to understand.



## ***Recommendations***

- Ensure that the principal is instrumental in the formulation of the SIG implementation plan for Years 2 and 3 so that she can define the support that she needs and identify the partners that will be required to ensure swift and effective improvement;
- Ensure that the principal has all of the operational authority to make the decisions that are, first and foremost, right for the students at Glenwood Learning Academy;
- Ensure that the principal has sufficient access to an experienced mentor who can provide her with the required level of leadership support;
- Consider the appointment of a School Administrative Manager (SAM) who can deal with some of the management issues and can therefore release the principal to take an even more proactive effective role in leading both the school and the turnaround process;
- The School Corporation should reconsider the composition of the support team for the school.
- Develop and share with the school community a whole school vision and mission for the development and improvement of the school, which establishes a professional culture within the school which is based on high expectations and a belief that all students can reach proficiency;
- Develop a strategic improvement and development plan (SDIP) that identifies no more than two priorities, and which includes interim benchmarks, success criteria, goals, costs and names the people responsible for each element of the work;
- Develop a structure diagram that details the main roles and responsibilities and the chain of accountability within the school and communicate it to the school community;

## ***Develop, with teacher and principal involvement, evaluation system for teachers and principals that consider student growth and assessments.***

There has been unacceptably slow progress at the school in developing “a rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation system for teachers and principals”. As a result the required “revolutionary changes” in learning and teaching have yet to take place. This work should have begun already and the school is well behind where it should be at this point since the quality of learning and teaching and the use of assessment is still at an unacceptably low standard. The school is scheduled to take part in Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) during the summer recess, but this is very late in the day and it will be essential that this training is wholly effective and enables the school to recover the ground lost in this area of development during Year 1 of the SIG implementation.

The principal visits classrooms daily, conducting walkthroughs and recording the outcomes on her I-pad. Other members of the administration and coaches also complete walkthroughs in classrooms but there is currently no means of calibrating the observations, and no common rubric in place, to record and prioritize findings or to support the giving of feedback or the setting of individual performance goals. The lack of calibration and coherence in the walkthrough process also means that there is no effective system for identifying the real professional development needs of the staff. Instead they are opting for professional development in unrelated and often frivolous aspects that are not related to the real needs of most of the students.

So far the only feedback that has been given to teachers has been generic and has identified general trends seen across a number of classes. Since this feedback is not differentiated to the needs of the individual teacher it has had very limited impact on the quality of learning and teaching and the progress that students are making, which remains insufficient. A small number of teachers have used the generic feedback that has been provided to develop personal professional development plans that are geared towards increasing student engagement.

Routine evaluations, completed for contractual reason, were completed on schedule with the support of district staff. These evaluations have identified a number of shortcomings in the quality of professional performance in several classes and led to the principal asking for a small number of staff to be replaced.

### ***Recommendations***

- Ensure that everything possible is done to prepare for the TAP training to be received by school staff during the summer recess;
- Ensure that all staff members understand the significance of teacher evaluation and are completely aware of the implications;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the changes in professional practice that will be required as the school implements the TAP process throughout the school;
- Ensure that students, parents and all other members of the school community are appraised of the TAP process and understand why there will be changes in the way that the school operates;
- Develop an outcomes based rubric for recording evidence about learning and teaching to be used by administrators when they are completing walkthroughs and formal classroom observations;
- Develop a protocol, based on TAP for delivering verbal feedback to teachers;
- Develop a protocol, based on TAP for setting and maintaining performance goals for teachers;
- Develop a professional development portfolio for each teacher including the details of the training they have completed.

***Reward school leaders, teachers and staff who, in implementing this model, increased student achievement, and remove those who, after professional development, have not improved sufficiently:***

Since no progress has been made in developing and implementing an evaluation system for teachers and principals that consider student growth and assessments, progress in this aspect of the work of the school is unacceptable and has made no impact on the quality of learning and teaching and the standards achieved by the students.

### ***Recommendations***

- Once there is a robust and reliable mechanism for evaluating teachers and principals, it must be implemented in such a way that it provides constructive feedback, sets achievement goals and monitors progress against those goals so that the quality of learning and teaching improves and the rate of student progress is increased so that they achieve higher scores in summative assessments;
- In the event of a teacher not making the required changes to the learning and teaching in their classroom and the scores in summative assessments failing to improve, or going down, they must be replaced and a more effective teacher appointed.

### ***Provide high quality, job embedded professional development***

Although a lot of professional development has been made available to the school staff, at considerable expense, the impact of this professional development has been extremely limited and the school has not obtained sufficient value for money from the dollars spent. This is mainly because there is no coherent plan driving the professional development program and staff members are given an overly generous allowance to design the training program of their choice.

There has been an improvement in the understanding of the importance of data in the school, with administrators and coaches having a suitably good appreciation of the need to assess regularly and to use this assessment evidence to inform lesson planning. This enhanced understanding of data is yet to make a sufficiently significant impact in many classrooms and because of the lack of carefully planned formative assessments, the needs of many individual and groups of students are yet to be met.

Staff members have been given significant additional training in behaviour management and many of them now have a wider range of strategies. This is not, however, consistently true across the school, with

the net result that a small number of classrooms create the vast majority of behavioural issues. The main reason for poor behaviour in the school is the inability of too many of the staff to engage and motivate the student, mainly because the lessons are not sufficiently well planned to meet their needs.

Professional development is not sufficiently well linked to the needs of the school and money is being wasted allowing individual staff members to pursue training that is not appropriate to either the school or its students. While it is important to allow a proportion of the professional development budget to be used to develop the personal and professional needs of the staff, the main priority must be given to the needs of the students and the school, and currently, this is just not the case.

The leadership of the school is well aware that the school needs additional emphasis on cultural competency, the use of data to support goal setting, basic lesson planning and aspects of behavioural management and yet staff members are still being encouraged, and even incentivised to develop personal professional development plans that include few, if any, of these key elements. The school is paying a lot of money for professional development from a plethora of vendors, selected by the school corporation, which are not suitably well matched to the needs of the students. The resultant support is far too technical and theoretical and while it may be founded on the finest research in the land it is not sufficiently appropriate to the needs of teachers who lack many of the basic elements of good teaching and do not know how to either engage or motivate students that may have different learning styles.

The principal and administration are receiving good support from Kristie Sweeney, an experienced administrator with well developed coaching skills. This is having a positive impact on the leadership and management of the school. That support, which did not begin until December, when several unfortunate decisions had already been made, is not available in sufficient quantities moving forward and the principal will need more frequent access to support of this quality.

### ***Recommendations***

- Create a professional development plan based on the prioritized needs of the students, the school and the staff, in that order, that ensures that the quality of learning, teaching and the use of assessment improves across all classes and that standards of achievement rise;
- Through rigorous monitoring ensure that the strategies that staff learn as part of the staff development plan are implemented consistently throughout the school;
- Ensure that the providers of professional development are the ones that the school needs and not just the ones that other organizations have existing contracts with;
- Select professional developers that provide the school with training programs that are practical and easily understood and deal with key areas like engagement and motivation in easily understood ways and provide staff members with a tool kit of suggestions and strategies that work;
- Use the professional development plan to prioritize what is being offered to staff at any one time and limit the number of different coaches and trainers so that staff members do not get overburdened and confused;
- Find another principal coach or mentor for the principal who can support her and the leadership team on a more regular and sustained basis.

### ***Implement strategies to recruit, place and retain staff:***

This area of the school seems to be working in at least a satisfactory way since the school was able to fill all of the vacancies and to appoint the specialist staff it required to start the year. Vacancies have arisen during the year and the principal has taken advantage of these opportunities to strengthen the team. As we reach the end of the first year a small number of staff will be moving on or retiring and the principal has identified replacements that she is confident will further strengthen the instructional team and reduce levels of disengagement on the staff.

Based on the evidence available to date the school does not appear to have a problem in either recruiting or placing staff but will need to develop a range of incentives to retain key staff in the future. It is possible

that the numbers of teaching staff leaving the school will increase during the school's second year as staff members realize that expectations are higher for both staff and students.

***Recommendations:***

- Continue to ramp up the professional expectations of staff through regular monitoring of quality and standards to ensure that all staff realize the progress and achievement of all students is the number one priority;
- To ensure transparency, the administration should inform the teaching staff what the focus of walkthroughs will be and what it is that you are concentrating on when they are visiting classes;
- Monitor carefully the numbers of behavioural incidents and special education referrals associated with each staff member so that this information can inform any teacher evaluation program devised for the school.

***Provide increased learning time for students and staff:***

The school has made unsatisfactory progress with this aspect of the school improvement grant and is not yet providing all students and staff with additional time to raise standards of achievement for all students.

The school day has not been extended for all students, as required under the grant, and although it appears that any such moves are being resisted by certain staff and may not be popular, this has to happen relatively quickly. The school has an after school program that is attended by a small but growing number of students, but this does not meet the criteria for this aspect of the grant. There are existing plans to involve teaching staff in extra days during the summer recess, and while this may help to make a positive impact on teacher effectiveness, it will not directly influence the required improvements in student achievement in the short term.

It will be essential that the principal is well advised and supported during this potentially difficult period and that care is taken to win popular support with parents and the community.

***Recommendations:***

- The school must produce as part of its strategic development and improvement plan a clear rationale for extending the school day and consider all of the options for the way that this extra time can be used to add the greatest value to the students and to raise standards of achievement in core subjects.
- It is essential that any additional time has to be for a specific purpose and not just involve more time being allocated to the same old things.
- Once it has been decided what is to be done with this additional time and an implementation plan has been developed, the school will need to develop and communicate a number of options with staff, parents and other community stakeholders;
- Once all stakeholders have been given an opportunity to contribute to the debate a quick decision must be made and a date set for immediate implementation;

***Use data to implement an aligned instructional program:***

Despite the fact that the school has spent a considerable amount of time this past year working with the Cicero Group and Data Wise to develop the analysis and use of data, there has not had a sufficiently strong impact on the quality of learning and teaching throughout the school and therefore progress in this area does not meet the expected standard. This work has been effective in developing a greater understanding of the importance of data among the administration and a proportion of teaching staff, but much more work needs to be done to improve the analysis and use of data to inform lesson planning and to impact positively on the quality and standards in each class.

Data collection and recording processes are improving but much more work needs to be done to develop formative assessments in all subjects at all levels. This will almost certainly involve the restructuring and

re-launching of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) which were suspended part way through the year because they were not functioning profitably. The school also has a lot to do to develop a clear understanding of how to align its curriculum both to the common core standards and to state standards. Progress has been slow to date and must be given fresh impetus in the new academic year.

***Recommendations:***

- Reconstitute and facilitate the PLCs as face-to-face opportunities for staff from different areas of the school to discuss and analyze data and disseminate good professional practices in the transition of data into best practice in the classroom;
- Ensure that work has been done in each subject areas to develop a curriculum that is closely aligned to the common core standards and state standards and identifies power standards and end of grade level expectations;
- Develop formative assessments that are linked to the main themes identified in the common core standards and state standards;
- Ensure that staff in each grade level are given common planning time to discuss data, identify where strategic interventions are required and to share lesson planning and the most effective teaching strategies;
- Ensure that the support provided by Data Wise is now focused in getting the use of data firmly established in classrooms.

***Promote the use of data to inform and differentiate instruction:***

While it is clear that the school is working hard to promote the use of data to inform and differentiate instruction, it is evident from many of the lessons observed during the evaluation visit that this promotion has not been sufficiently effective and is not making a big enough impact on the quality of learning and teaching in most classrooms. In many of the lessons observed all students complete the same work at the same level irrespective of their prior achievement levels and capability. In many classes students move between different small group activities, but since the work at each of these stations is the same for all, this in no way helps to match work to the needs of the students.

The quality of the planning observed is weak, with insufficient emphasis on the learning to be completed, the expected outcomes and the needs of the students. In too many lessons a single task is planned, often with limited relevance to the state standards, and is completed by all despite the fact that it is often too easy for the highest achieving students and too hard for the lowest performers.

***Recommendations:***

- Urge the Cicero Group and Data Wise to reconsider their approach over the summer recess to ensure that what is planned for next year is more effective and makes a greater impact on quality and standards;
- Monitor and evaluate lesson planning to ensure that teachers are planning to meet the differing needs of the students in their classes;
- Monitor lessons, together with the planning to ensure that teachers are actually delivering what they said they would and that the lesson for today's lesson builds upon what was learned yesterday;

***Provide mechanisms for family and community engagement:***

The school has made good progress in this area and progress at least meets expectations. The Community and Family Outreach Coordinator (CFOC) is making a very positive impact on this work, particularly with regard to communication with community organizations and is being ably supported by one of the Assistant Principals who has oversight of this area of the schools work. The CFOC has a clear mandate for her work and has a good understanding of her duties. The school has been instrumental in the success of the "Big Table" community strategy meetings, contributed to by over 70 community

partners and held each quarter. The CFOC also facilitates a regular School Site Council and Wellness Meeting that provides, for example, healthcare to staff members and parents. Regular meetings are held by a number of other community groups including the Glenwood Neighbourhood Association and the Health and Wellness Planning Committee. The school has quickly established itself as a focal point for the community and hosts a number of well attended community events including Weatherization Meetings; Keep Evansville Beautiful and a Gala Holiday Night.

The challenge is now to translate and channel all of this community activity into secure links between teachers and parents that support student achievement and to help parents to be more involved in the education of their children. Parents report that there is a stark contrast in the extent to which staff are approachable and encourage parental involvement and can name specific staff that work very hard to develop links and others that shut down communication at the earliest opportunity.

***Recommendations:***

- Ensure that the promotion of community engagement and involvement in out of school activities is considered a positive and significant factor when completing teacher evaluations;
- Encourage the further development of links with parents;
- Develop a program of workshops where parents can learn how to help and support their own children at home;
- Ensure that everything is done to forge strong links with all parents as partners and to heal the divide between the two schools;
- Use the extension of the school working day as an opportunity to consult and liaise with the community.

***LEA and SEA support for the school with ongoing intensive technical assistance and support:***

The support that has been provided to the school to date has not been effective in securing the amount of progress that is required to significantly change and improve the school and has not been a good enough use of the money spent to date.

The principal has greatly appreciated the support she has received from Kristie Sweeney, but this started late, is of limited extent and duration and does not on its own provide her with the degree of mentoring that is required given the complexity of the task. If Ms Sweeney cannot extend the time that she has available to support the principal then additional support will need to be found.

The Cicero group has done good work in increasing the awareness of data in the building, particularly at administrator and coach level, but has yet to really make a positive impact on learning and teaching at classroom level. Teachers are now much more aware that data is valuable, but need more support in how to analyze the results and translate them into actions. Progress with the development of data driven instruction has therefore been poor and in most classes the work set is not sufficiently well enough matched to the needs of the students.

The principal is the product of the Learning Leadership Cadre, a relationship between EVSC and Brown University and is a great fan of the professional development that they provided as part of her personal journey to school leadership. She has high expectations of the leadership academy that is planned for her staff during the summer recess although discussions with Dr Wong, conducted as part of the evaluation visit to the school did not suggest that the planning of the proposed program was at a sufficiently advanced stage. Most of the considerable sum of money being paid to Brown is for the development of a tool to measure student engagement in the school. The school has received some data that has been generated by this system but considering that this element accounts for the main part of the \$100,000 plus that has been paid to Brown University, it has yet to provide effective value for money.

Diehl Evaluation and Consulting Services have conducted a desktop analysis of the data available for the school and have produced a very extensive report that primarily evaluates the performance of the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation in meeting its obligations to the school. It suggests that all possible support has been made available to Tammy Dexter and her team. The findings of these reports

are not however consistent with some the comments made by representatives of the school corporation who visited the school to meet with the review team. In their view, the district could have provided better support to the school earlier in the year than they did. The school has to date paid \$25,000 for the services provided by Diehl Evaluation and Consulting Services, with the same amount due for the second half of the year.

It is not possible to evaluate the impact of the services provided to the school by New View Publications, who will provide training in Applied Control Theory (ACT) in the early part of August.

The main weakness with the support provided by the school's external partners is that the focus areas and associated supports were identified by the district before the principal was appointed and although most of these vendors already work in other EVSC schools or have existing contracts with the district, in several cases are not actually appropriate to the needs of the school as they exist at the present time. It is essential that the principal is able to select the school improvement partners that are best placed to meet the needs of the school and has the freedom to chart the course moving forward. This could result in some other more practically based and cost effective vendors replacing some of the existing providers

***Recommendations:***

- The school should, as a matter of urgency, evaluate the cost effectiveness and the value that each of its partners has brought to the school and decide whether it wishes to retain their services into Year 2 of the SIG grant. Given the generic nature of some of the supports and the limited returns from some large cash figures it is clear that certain partners have not given sufficient value for money to date;
- The principal must be allowed to select her chosen external partners for Year 2 of the project.